



# THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

1230 YORK AVENUE

NEW YORK, NY 10021

November 6, 1980

JOSHUA LEDERBERG

PRESIDENT

Dr. George W. Beadle ↓  
5533 Dorchester Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60637

Dear Beets:

As you know, in connection with my efforts to draft a detailed memoir on Ed Tatum, I have been trying to locate critical documents on the history of Neurospora to bolster various historical accounts, and your own reminiscences. It has been some interesting, if protracted, detective work; but I was able some time ago to locate: a) Ed's first Neurospora notebook beginning March 1941 and b) Carleton Schwerdt's lecture notes on the comparative biochemistry course that Ed gave that same quarter at Stanford.

These documents were important evidence on the details of timing: especially in the face of Bill McElroy's insistence that he had seen Neurospora in your or Ed's laboratory at Stanford the previous summer (1940)!

Just a few days ago I was lucky enough to discover a further treasure trove, namely the correspondence of B. O. Dodge that has been archived at the New York Botanical Gardens. I hope you may be interested to see resuscitated one or two of your own letters (enclosed) that nail down the beginning of the story with further certainty.

I know that I have heard both from you, and previously from Ed, that you had found it necessary to discard the overwhelming mass of your correspondence and notes in the course of your several moves. My writing now is therefore in the nature of a last ditch plea with respect to any documentary material that might still be found. I have been in touch with the Archives at Cal Tech, and every place I could think of around Stanford.

Dr. George W. Beadle  
November 6, 1980

- 2 -

Particularly interesting, and an item that there might potentially be some hope of having been saved, would be your own lab notebook for the few months beginning in February 1941. Ed's notes refer to strain #299 -- the B6-less mutant -- but in a context that makes it perfectly clear that these strains had been worked over and recorded in another notebook, presumably a separate set of notes in your own hand governing the genetic manipulation of the first Neurospora isolates. Then his notes take up the definition of nutritional requirements on the strains thus delivered.

In, as I said last ditch fashion, can I get any recollection from you as to the possible disposition of your own lab notebooks?

I hope everyone is well.

Yours sincerely,



Joshua Lederberg

Encl.

bcc: Carolyn Kopp